

GSA Child Care Let's Be Ready

Emergency Communication

How do you communicate with families in an emergency?

GSA recommends you have an off-site phone number to relay information to parents. In an emergency, it is typically easier to call outside of the area so we suggest out-of-state. You call the number to alert them of your evacuation and again when you reach your evacuation site. Parents also call this same number to obtain information. It is possible that cell service will go down so plan on using landlines. (See Out-of-State Emergency Contact Tool #3)

You should also consider a secondary means of communication. Do you already use social media, such Twitter or Facebook? Social media can be an effective way to communicate with families in real-time.

Practice, practice!

Out-of -State Relay Number

- Call the emergency number at least every other month. Positions turnover so make sure the receiving center is informed and ready to assist.
- Ask parents to also practice calling the number.
- Arrange actual drills where you call with the evacuation notice and others call to get updates.

Social Media

- If any system is only used during an emergency, then it may not work.
- Even your secondary means of communication must be used regularly if it is going to be of any value.
- Regularly post center updates and news to reach families and get everyone comfortable using social media.

Have you also considered Social Media?



You control who sees your group and its content.

It is highly recommended you set any group to "Secret": Only members can see a secret group, who's in it, and what members post. You would create the group and add individuals.

What are the privacy options for groups?

Facebook has three privacy options for groups: Open, Closed and Secret. The table on page 2 explains who can join these groups and what people can see about them.

How do I know who's seen each post or message in a group? Facebook messages and posts in groups with fewer than 250 people are marked as "seen" after your group members have seen them. If your group reaches 250 members or more, you'll no longer see who's seen messages and posts.

The check under each post indicates how many group members have seen it. This way you can stay updated on the group's activity. Hover over the to see who has seen it. Anyone who can view the group post will see the . Keep in mind that if people see a group post or message, it doesn't always mean they had the chance to read it carefully.





Privacy options for Facebook Groups

<u>Facebook</u> Groups	Open	Closed	Secret
Who can join?	Anyone can join or be added by a member	Anyone can ask to join or be added	Anyone, but they have to be added
Who can see the group name and who's in it?	Anyone	Anyone	Only members
Who can see posts in the group?	Anyone	Only members	Only members
Who can find the group in search?	Anyone	Anyone	Only members
Who can see stories about the group on Facebook (like in News Feed and search)?	Anyone	Anyone	Only members

New to Facebook? Learn how to create a Facebook account. Other Facebook Resources:

https://www.facebook.com/help/34512135559712/ https://www.facebook.com/about/groups https://www.facebook.com/help/www/220336891328465?rdrhc https://www.facebook.com/help/409719555736128

Social Media: So Many Choices

Facebook is just one example of using social media to communicate with families in real-time.

Twitter is another good method that your families may already be using. https://twitter.com/about. Or consider group text messaging.

There are many ways to stay connected. Just make sure you have a plan.





Choose the communication method that works best for you and your child care center community. The important message is that you need a plan for how you can reach your families in all emergencies. And practice, practice, practice!